

# BREUCKLAND

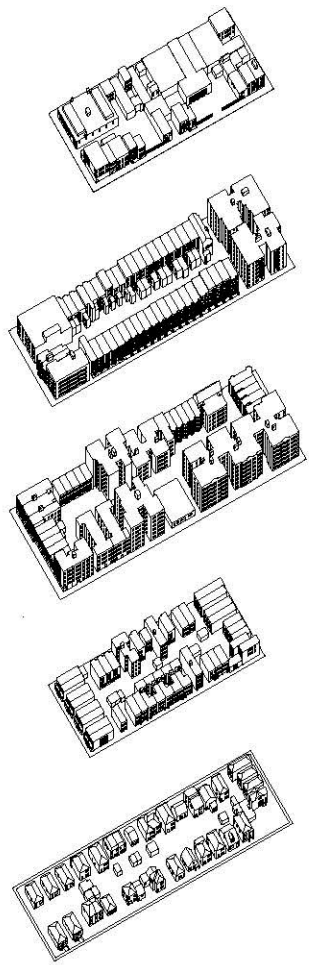
Design interventions for a post-crisis Brooklyn





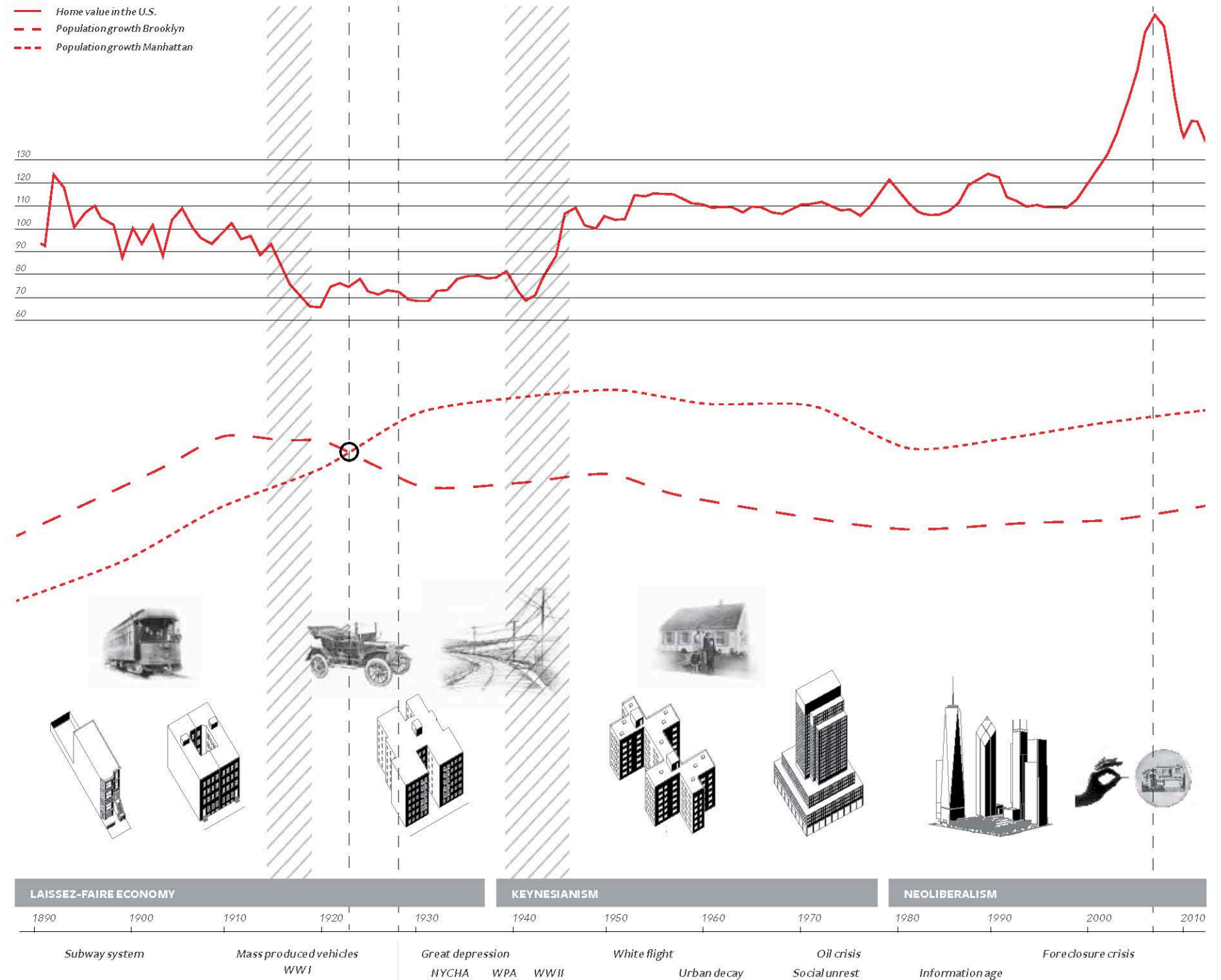


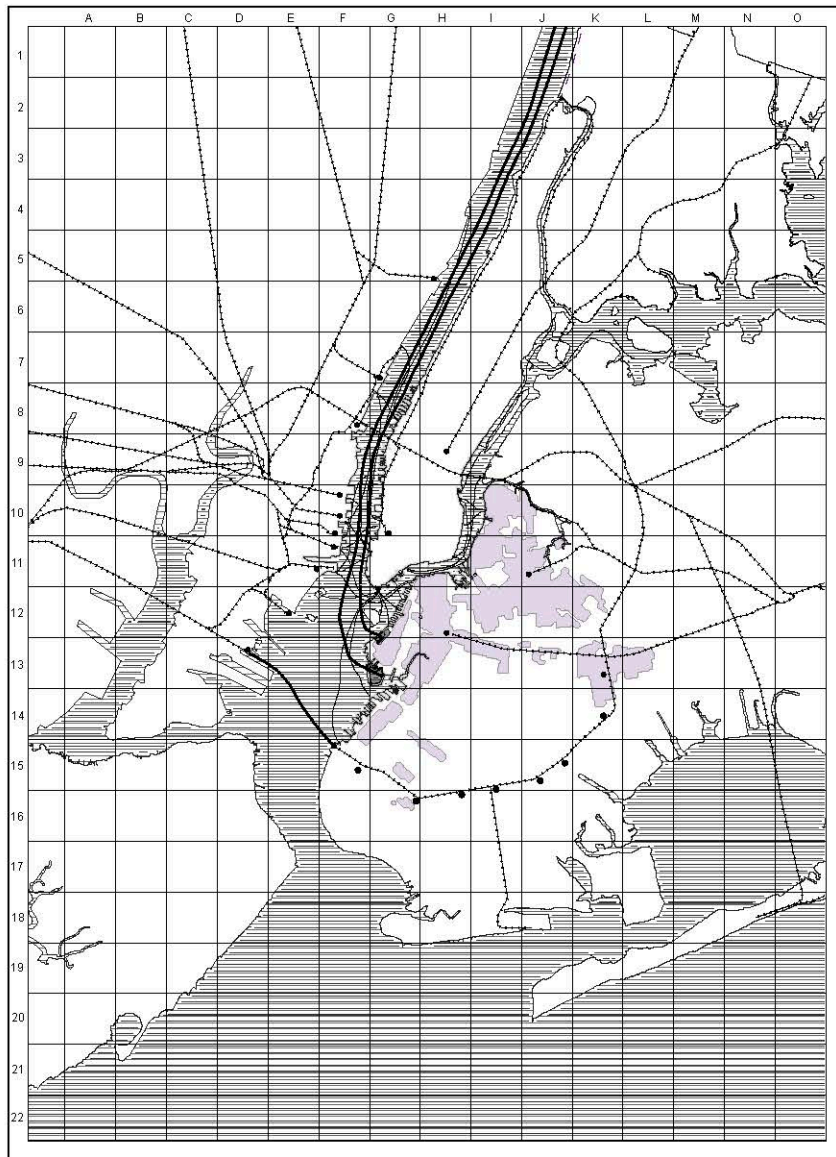




#### TYPOLGY AND SOCIETY THROUGH TIME

Architecturally, the borough of Brooklyn offers an interesting window into the changing values of American society over the 20th and early 21st centuries. The different types of buildings trace the city from the 19th century's rapid urbanization, over the Great Depression and the following post-war urban renewal projects, to the very recent foreclosure crisis. The building blocks shows a great diversity in dimensions, typologies – from old warehouses in Red Hook, brownstones in Park Slope, old tenements in Crown Heights, semidetached multi-family homes in East New York, to the single-family detached homes in Howard Beach.





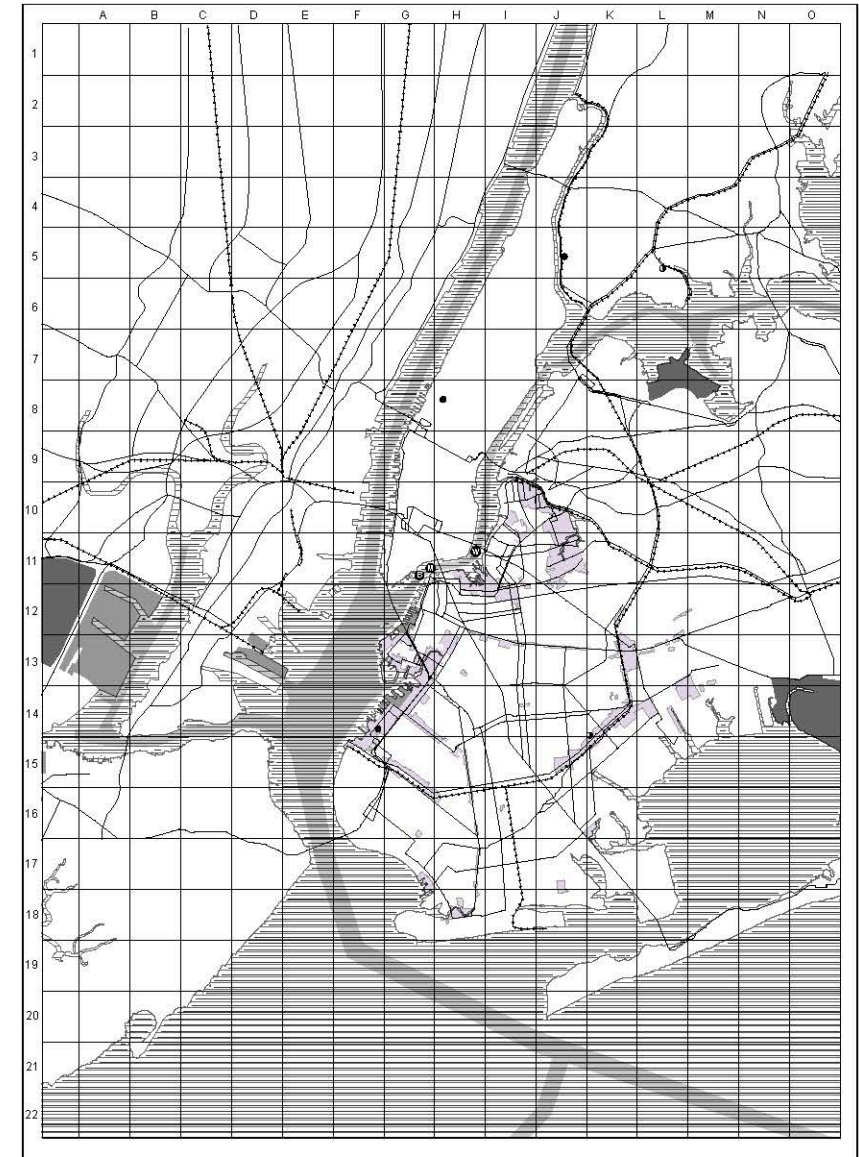
*Rail and shipping 1920*

- Light naval route
- Freight naval route
- Pier
- Basin
- 1912 manufacturing
- Railroad
- Terminal
- Market

#### TRANSPORT MODES

In 1825 the Erie Canal gave birth to the Empire State providing the fastest connection between the Atlantic international trade and the American Midwest. The competitive advantage resulted in an economic boom throughout New York State and New York City

in particular. Brooklyn's industrial development began to thrive, with goods being transported overseas and by railway. Overland, rail tracks were constructed connecting the five boroughs with Long Island, New Jersey and upstate New York. After WW II, three major and national shifts changed the face of freight



*Current overland networks*

- Truck route expressway
- Truck route interborough
- Truck route local
- Airport
- Container terminal
- Navigable water routes
- Terminal market
- Wholesale market
- 2012 manufacturing
- Ⓟ Brooklyn Bridge clearance 135ft
- Ⓜ Manhattan Bridge clearance 135ft
- Ⓦ Williamsburg Bridge clearance 135ft

transportation: the decline of the railway network, containerization and the construction of a national highway system. New York City lost its container port to New Jersey because of space requirements and technological developments. An extensive highway network was constructed in a couple of dec-

ades, connecting areas of freight concentration such as airports and terminals. Nowadays, with 80% of all cargo in New York City carried by trucks and only 1% by rail, removing trucks from the roads is a challenging ambition.

Dedicated to Mojdeh,  
who taught us how to keep teaching ourselves

## **BREUCKLAND**

Breuckland is a post-crisis utopia for the next era of city making. Not very different from Brooklyn, Breuckland is the alter ego of a contemporary metropolis. It offers an alternative to the standard discourse on urban strategies, the rhetoric of sustainability and iconographic thinking about the city. In response to threats such as the foreclosure crisis, rising sea levels and gentrifying real-estate operations, Breuckland proves its relevance as uncompromised testing ground. The borough of Brooklyn as we know it is transformed into the utopian Breuckland by architects and their ability to invent new forms and hybrid combinations. With space as a common denominator, the design strategies presented in this publication are an invitation to designers, policy makers, engineers, developers, inhabitants, educators and other professionals for transdisciplinary thinking about Brooklyn in specific and our urban environment in general.

New York City is renowned as a laboratory for new urban concepts (Battery Park City, underground public space, tower and plaza...), architectural typologies (the skyscraper, the atrium, brownstone housing, coop's...) and urban landscapes (Central and Prospect Park, the High Line, Freshkills Park...). At the dawn of the 21st century, our focus shifts from Manhattan to Brooklyn. With a population of about 2.5 million, Brooklyn would rank as the fourth largest city of the US, if it had not fused in 1898 into the metropole of New York City. Today, over 50% of the world population lives in urban environments. But that same urban environment consists of much more than the super density of Manhattan and the excitement of transport hubs or well designed public spaces. The majority of any urban fabric is ordinary, monotonous and functional. We can't afford to only address what is exceptional. Brooklyn, much more than Manhattan, can help us to focus on what is the daily reality for the largest part of a metropolitan population.

With its continuous carpet of housing fabric intersected by robust industrial fragments and large scale infrastructure, the borough of Brooklyn offers a new





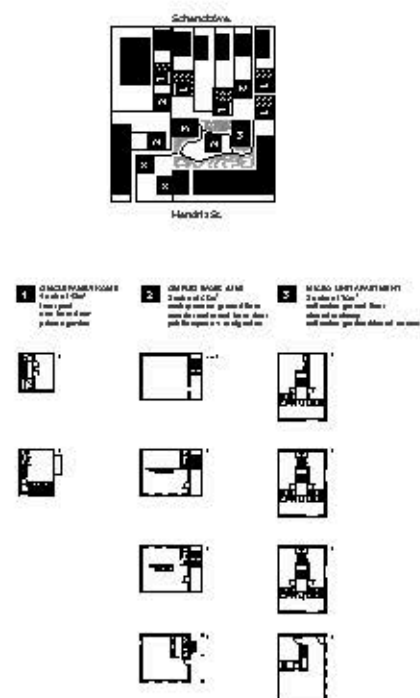
## DIS-LODGING

Breuckland dislodges the current real estate market and proposes alternatives for an ever more varied population in an ever less diverse housing market. Such strategies include, enhance and reposition the housing market as a social, economical and organizational system. Co-housing, land trusts, ownership coöperatives and micro-societies are models that link the design of typologies to the production of housing stock and rethink their life span as commodity. All projects tackle socio-economic issues by searching more sustainable housing conditions. They are applicable to the majority of the New York population, the 99% if you want, and not solely the wealthy urban settler or gentrifier.

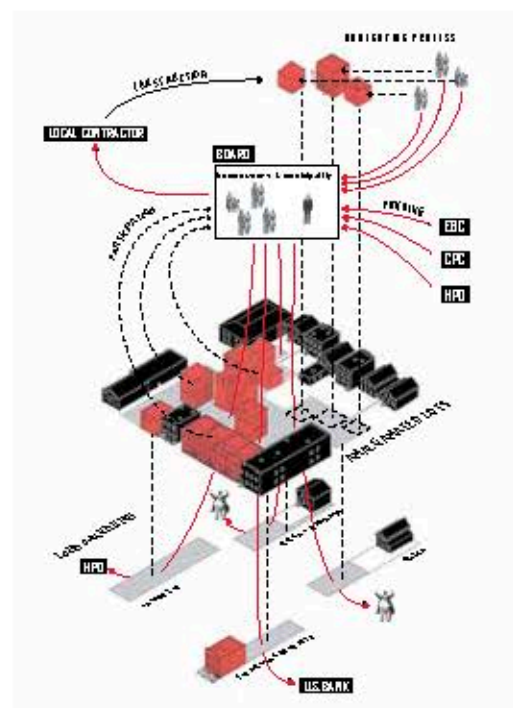




Possible Macro-Lot utopia for a typical East New York building block



Overview of the three typologies  
To illustrate the flexibility only the 'infrastructure' is shown,  
the inner walls and furniture are in fill

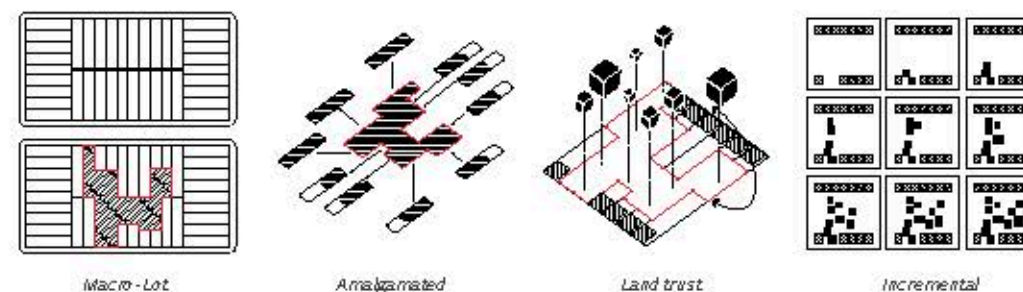


The design intent is translated into a financial scheme  
showing the different processes and stakeholders of a  
Macro-Lot

## MACRO-LOTS

An amalgamated housing strategy  
for incremental change in East New York

CAMIEL VAN NOTEN



East New York is a diverse but economically disadvantaged region in the eastern part of Brooklyn in New York City, a piece of New York, far beyond the tourist maps. The neighborhood of East New York offers an interesting window into the changing values of American society over the 20th and early 21st centuries.

The different types of buildings that exist there trace the neighborhood and city from optimistic heyday to a society that retreated from the public realm and finally to the recent foreclosure crisis. This housing crisis has proven that the 18th century lots and the typical single family detached house aren't sustainable anymore.

The project focuses on the northern part of East New York, historically known as the Village of New Lots and characterized by an interesting mix of manufacturing and housing. Macro-Lots examines strategic mutations of existing lot divisions in or-

der to create a new housing condition, based on collective homeownership. More than an architectural design, the concept of a Macro-Lot primarily represents a socio-economic reorganization.

It arises from a group of people who believe they are stronger together than alone and is set up, maintained and expanded by its residents. It proposes an urban strategy for dealing with affordability, foreclosure and typological disuse in the urban fabric of East New York.

BREUCKLAND is a utopian yet radical mirror of a more resilient and liveable city. Based on Brooklyn, New York, BREUCKLAND is a transformation and adaptation of an existing urban context, that incorporates several design proposals for a society in evolution. This publication is the result of two years of design research at the KU Leuven, conducted by Tom Thys and Ward Verbakel.

